NATURAL NEWS

The Field Museum
Exploring
The Earth And Its
People

Weekly Staff Newsletter
September 11, 1998

Welcome Wagon alert

If you look closely next time you arrive for work, you just might see the Museum's newest neighbors.

Charlene Murray (Board Relations) reported yesterday that four young birds (no sign of their parents) seem to have taken up residence on the south side of the Museum.

With fresh air, fresh water, plentiful twigs, and a comfortable tree home, our newest neighbors seem to be in fine feather and excellent health.

Their stay may be temporary, as we expect they will be moving to warmer climes before long. So stop by and give them a warm welcome if you're passing that way.

Poster Art from the Golden Age of Mexican Cinema, 1936-1957

The Poster Art exhibit in the Webber gallery started attracting visitors even before its official opening on Saturday, September 5. This show will be open through November 29 and promises to be a great success.

All prominent genres and superstars of the Golden Age of Mexican cinema are presented. Original hand-made designs with bright colors, gorgeous women's images and brave and decisive men's faces give the impression of rich and colorful cinematography as a vital part of Mexican popular culture.

As coordinators of this exhibit we would like to extend our warmest thanks to **Abraham Bloom, Lance Kirsh, Gosia Koscielak, Michael Paha, John Petreikis,** and **Amanda Reeves** whose effort and dedication made the collection of posters so beautifully presented.

Emma Moskalevskaya and **Mia Schillace**

FIELD NOTES

Week of September 14

Public Events/Special Events

Chicago Hang Gliding Organization
• Monday, 7 p.m. in LH1

Primitive Art Society
• Monday, 7:30 p.m. in Clrm C

Columbia Coll. Teachers Workshop
• Thursday, 4:30 p.m. in Clrm C

Chicago Fire vs. Kansas City
• Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Family Overnight
• Friday thru Saturday morning

Unity Day
• Saturday (Entire Museum)

Nuveen Day at The Field Museum
• Sunday (Entire Museum)

Staff/Volunteer Events

Aerobics Class
Outside Philippines exhibit
• Tuesday and Thursday, 5:15 p.m.

Softball Game
• Tuesday, 5:45 p.m.

Volunteer Training Session
• Wednesday, 9 a.m. in LH2

Volunteer Training Sessions
• Saturday, 9 a.m. in LH2 & Clrm C

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Mammalogists return from Utah field season

Larry Heaney (Zoology) and summer interns **Stephanie Linde** and **Kate Walker** have recently returned from several weeks of field work in the La Sal Mountains of eastern Utah, conducted in collaboration with Eric Rickart, Research Associate in Zoology and Curator of Vertebrates at the Utah Museum of Natural History. This was part of a long-term study of diversity patterns of mammals in the mountains of the Great Basin and Central Rocky Mountains. The study focuses on the distribution of small mammals along the elevational gradient from hot, dry desert at low elevations (roughly 4500 feet) to cool, wet forest at high elevation (up to 11,000 feet). The team found that previous information was very incomplete, with the smallest species, the shrews, being especially poorly known in the past. More importantly, a general bias in past sampling seemed to show low diversity at middle elevation, whereas the new results show the middle elevation having the highest diversity. These results will help to understand the evolution of the fauna, and may also help in developing more effective planning for conservation and management.

Summer intern leaves for research in the Philippines

Kate Walker, summer intern with **Larry Heaney**, is leaving shortly for 10 months in the Philippines. Kate graduated (with honors) from the University of Chicago in June, and is taking a year off from her studies to gain field experience in the Philippines by working with **Jodi Sedlock** (grad student in Mammals, advised by Larry Heaney) and Nina Ingle (a grad student at Cornell University who works closely with Larry) on their studies of the ecology of Philippine bats. Kate then plans to apply to graduate school for studies in ecology and evolution. We wish her well!

NSF funds powerful computer for molecular lab

Assistant Curator **Kathleen Pryer** (Botany) was recently notified by the National Science Foundation (Major Research Instrumentation Program) that she and co-PI's **Shannon Hackett** (Zoology), **François Lutzoni** (Botany), **Tim Krauskopf** (Information Services) and **Lee Weigt** (Biochemistry Labs) were awarded the full amount requested for the acquisition of a high-capacity multiprocessor computer for phylogenetic analysis of DNA sequence data. Prior NSF-sponsored automated sequencer instrumentation awarded to the Museum's core molecular facility (1995-96) led to a remarkable increase in output of quality DNA sequence data that soon outstripped the Museum's fastest desktop PC's and UNIX servers in their capability for adequate data analysis. Determining phylogenetic relationships of large numbers of taxa is computationally very demanding. Most major users of the proposed instrumentation already have DNA sequence data sets in hand that are in excess of 100 taxa, often requiring many months of CPU time just for initial analyses. This NSF grant, in combination with a generous contribution from the Museum, will permit the acquisition of significant additional computing resources and will allow us to hire a computational biologist to provide technical support to Field Museum research scientists. The computing speed afforded by this computer will enhance research excellence and leadership, and will expand research training opportunities in molecular evolution and systematics.

TODAY!!!

Farewell party for designer Jason Grandt

The Exhibits Department is hosting a farewell party for 3D designer **Jason Grandt** *today, Friday September 11, at 4:30 p.m.* up in the fourth floor skylight. Jason is moving on to Disney in Florida to pursue his dreams and join the ranks of the Imagineers. Please join us.

MUSEUM PLANNING CALENDAR
RESERVATION AND CANCELLATION FORM

EVENT (NAME/SPONSOR)		
ORIGINATOR/DEPARTMENT		EXTENSION
REQUESTED LOCATION/SPACE		
DAY(S) OF EVENT 1st Choice:	DATE(S) OF EVENT 1st Choice:	YEAR
2nd Choice:	2nd Choice:	
TIME OF EVENT (FROM - TO):		IS THIS AM OR PM:
SET-UP TIME NEEDED: (SPECIFY AMOUNT OF TIME NEEDED AND THE DAY(S)).		TAKE-DOWN TIME NEEDED: (SPECIFY SAME INFORMATION)
CANCELLED RESERVATION (PLEASE PROVIDE EVENT NAME AND DATES)		

NAME OF PERSON SUBMITTING REQUEST	DATE OF REQUEST

To check on availability of space in advance, the space and appropriate contact are listed on the reverse side of the monthly calendar. The calendar is published once a month in the Natural News.

This request does not replace the GREEN SHEET or WORK ORDER needed for the specified event(s).

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

REQUEST CONFIRMED FOR DAY(S):	DATE:	SPACE:
CONFIRMED BY:		DATE:

8/93

Welcome new Education Department staff!

In continuing to expand our programs, we welcome several new staff members. Please offer a warm welcome to:

Lisa Niziolek – Giving up her free lunches at Maggiano's, Lisa has opted to join the Museum, and now serves as our department receptionist, point person, and assistant to **Mary Ellen Munley**. Lisa will also help to alleviate the shortage of real people on the other end of phone lines!

Mark DeNardo – After visiting Chicago for a brief 24-hour period touring with his band, Mark fell in love with our city and decided to relocate from Pennsylvania to Chicago. After a brief stint at the Kohl Children's Museum, Mark has joined us as the secretary for our Public Programs Division, which covers everything from our free programming for everyday visitors to our adult and family classes and overnights!

Nancy Shuttleworth – As a result of a two-year, half-million-dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Education (way to go!), Nancy will be Project Coordinator for our *Part of the World* Project. To increase the use of the Museum as an educational resource for Chicago Public Schools, the project will work with teams of teachers and UIC faculty to develop exhibit materials for CPS teachers.

Two of our staff members have joined us from the legal field (from the ridiculous to the sublime?) with two different approaches:

Jennifer Eagleton is developing a strategic plan for the use of educational technologies by the Museum. This involves a variety of activities, including expanding our present distance learning program and developing web-based supporting materials for student participants.

Dina Zissimopoulos is now our department writer. With all the school brochures, program books, and special mailings our department produces, we are now equipped to do our own editing and writing! Dina's responsibilities include everything from departmental reports to family exhibit activity guides!

Submitted by **Johanna Krynytzky**

$$ FINANCE FORUM $$

As reported recently in a commentary by Michael Levine printed in *The Non-Profit Times*, personal charity thrives in most parts of the country where government activism – and political liberalism devoted to goodness in the abstract – isn't as popular. It seems the "conservative" regions of the nation tend to have residents more given to "liberality" – in the sense of personal generosity – toward non-profit efforts to help others.

In 1995, the average charitable deduction per tax return nationwide was approximately $2,500. But in politically liberal states of the northeast, the numbers were considerably lower. For instance, Boston had the nation's 4th highest per capital income last year – but in charitable giving it was 28th among major urban communities. The areas of the country that brought up the overall average of charitable giving tend to be those known as heartlands of conservatism.

Mr. Levine asks the question: Is a philosophy that exalts government as the appropriate engine of community altruism entirely healthy – if one effect is to mute the altruistic instinct in individuals? The fact that the government won't be doing it at all, now and in the coming years, challenges us all to match our collective commitment to good with personal acts of goodness that can make us all better human beings.

New contact person for classroom and lecture hall reservation requests

Mark DeNardo in the Education Department, ext. 854, will now be responsible for reserving/booking the following spaces within the Museum: Montgomery Ward Hall (Lecture Hall 1), Lecture Hall 2, and Classrooms A, B and C. In order to reserve/book one of these rooms, please fill out the Room Reservation Form and send it directly to Mark. Just a reminder if you call to hold multiple dates – they will only be held for two weeks. Please be sure to confirm your final reservation with the form within two weeks. You'll find a copy of this form in this issue of the *Natural News*. If Mark is not available, you may also contact **Sandra Blake** at ext. 854. Thank you.

Submitted by **Nadine Kendra**

Update from Sponsored Programs

There is new information on our Sponsored Programs web site. From the Intranet Home Page (**http://intranet1/**), select Departments/Sponsored Programs, and from there you will find links to updated materials on federal programs, funding opportunities, and Museum rates and procedures, as well as other resources. I update these pages regularly, so check them early and often! Also, please let me know if there is additional information from Sponsored Programs that you would like to see included on the web pages. I am available at ext. 877 or at dbakken@fmnh.org.

Submitted by **Deborah A. Bakken**

NATURAL NEWS BULLETIN BOARD

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP MEETING

Christian Fellowship will meet in Classroom I on Wednesday, September 16, from 12 noon to 1:00. Please call **Sandra Blake** at ext. 638 if you have any questions.

FOR SALE

Brand new PUR Scout microbiological water purifier. Lightweight and compact size – ideal for camping, backpacking and travel abroad. Call **Melissa Hilton** at ext. 434 if you're interested in making a deal!

Natural News

The *Natural News* is edited by **Rodger Patience** in the Development office (ext. 617, patience@fmnh.org) and **Erica Kelly** in the Finance Department (ext. 584, ekelly@fmnh.org). Submissions are welcome via e-mail or on disk in Microsoft Word or WordPerfect format. The deadline for submissions is Tuesday at noon. Remember – write early and often!